

Carolina CAP Teams Praised for Mission Response

South Carolina and North Carolina members of the Civil Air Patrol, the Auxiliary of the US Air Force, are being praised for the successful completion of a search and recovery mission in western North Carolina near Cold Mountain in the Shining Rock Wilderness Area. The remains of a Florida-based aircraft, a Piper PA-32-260, and its two occupants were discovered on the morning of 13 May 2008. There were no survivors.

South Carolina wing ground team members Captain (Capt) Lee Berry, Senior Member Rick Bryant and Cadet Second Lieutenant Austin Bryant reached the crash site and helped secure the area for emergency medical access and investigation. A second ground team, led by First Lieutenant Jeff Parcell, Cadet First Lieutenant Adam Parcell, and Cadet Technical Sergeant John Spiers provided backup assistance. Communications relay was provided by Capt Ralph Driver. South Carolina operations were led by Capt Billy Geier. Others in South Carolina assisted. The search began on 12 May 2008.

The Incident Commander for this mission was Lieutenant Colonel Jeff Willis, from the North Carolina Wing. Major (Maj) John Maxfield, NC Wing, was the Mission Information Officer. For further details on this mission or media inquiries, please contact Maj Maxfield at 919-291-4028.

Brigadier General Amy Courter, National Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Strough, CAP/USAF Commander for the Middle East Region (MER), Colonel (Col) Charles Glass, Interim MER Commander, Col Larry Ragland, NC Wing Commander, and Col Emerson Smith, SC Wing Commander have all praised the collaborative work that was done among national, region, and wing resources to complete the mission. It was a CAP aircraft crew, Lt Col Wally Courtney and Capt Gary Lux, from the North Carolina wing, that first spotted the wreckage of the missing aircraft.

"When the call comes for the Civil Air Patrol to assist federal, state, and local agencies, the South Carolina Wing and its neighboring wings in North Carolina and in Georgia have always been prepared to complete any mission we are asked to do. Col Larry Ragland, the Commander of the North Carolina Wing and Col James Hughes, the Commander of the Georgia Wing, and I are prepared to work together under one Incident Commander to respond to emergencies, quickly, efficiently, and successfully. However, we can only do this with the

SC & NC Wings Praised

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Wednesday, 14 May 2008 13:13 - Last Updated Wednesday, 14 May 2008 14:14

support and readiness of our squadron commanders and the members of each squadron," said Col Emerson Smith.